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KT photo | **Tim Bath**

House of Burgess: Requiem for 'Spicey'

Spicer resigns over Scaramucci hiring

By Rob Burgess
Tribune columnist

Farewell, Sean Spicer, we hardly knew ye.

So much has happened in the past month since I've written about this White House, but I would be remiss if I let this occasion pass without making note of the press secretary's departure.

"Spicer abruptly resigned Friday over President Donald Trump's decision to tap a camera-ready financier to lead the beleaguered White House

communications team," reported The Associated Press' Ken Thomas and Jill Colvin. "The departing spokesman said the president 'could benefit from a clean slate.' ... [Spicer] quit in protest over the hiring of Anthony Scaramucci as the new White House communications director. Spicer denounced what he considered Scaramucci's lack of qualifications, according to people familiar with the situation who were not authorized to speak publicly about it. As his first act on the job, Scaramucci, a polished television commentator and Harvard Law graduate, announced from the White House briefing room that Sarah Huckabee Sanders would take Spicer's job. She had been Spicer's deputy."

We'll always have your comical string of false information to remember you by, Sean. He lasted a lot longer than I would have expected. Six months after Election Day was an astounding amount of time for anyone to stay.

As I wrote in my Jan. 25 column, "Size matters to Trump," Spicer spent Jan. 21, his first full day on the job, screaming at journalists and parroting the new president's lies about the size of his inauguration crowds. I was honestly surprised Spicer didn't resign the very next day.

Trump's fragile ego was once again front and center in Scaramucci's first press conference Friday.

"He's the most competitive person I've ever met," Scaramucci said of Trump. "OK — I've seen this guy throw a dead spiral through a tire. I've

seen him at Madison Square Garden with a topcoat on, he’s standing in the key, and he’s hitting foul shots and he’s swishing them, OK? He sinks three-foot putts.”

Saying ridiculous things in public is built into the job description of anyone who flacks for this administration. It’s just another Trump loyalty test. During a March 10 press conference, Spicer relayed Trump’s message that the newly released positive job report numbers “may have been phony in the past, but it’s very real now.”

Spicer knew the landscaping of the White House better than most. During his time in the administration of President George W. Bush as assistant for media and public affairs at the Office of the United States Trade Representative, Spicer volunteered to dress as the Easter Bunny at the White House Easter Egg Rolls. This knowledge of the terrain served him in other instances. As I wrote in my May 17 column, “Trump’s Tuesday Night Massacre,” Spicer scrambled into the shrubbery to escape reporters following Trump’s surprise firing of FBI director James Comey. “Spicer huddled [late May 9] among bushes near television sets on the White House grounds, not ‘in the bushes,’” read the editor’s note to Jenna Johnson’s Washington Post story. According to The Wall Street Journal’s Michael C. Bender on Friday, Spicer was once “spotted by a fellow White House official lugging [an] icebox down the White House driveway after 8 p.m.” after Spicer’s aide was denied the junior staffers’ refrigerator earlier in that day.

I’ll miss Melissa McCarthy playing “Spicey” on “Saturday Night Live.” McCarthy’s portrayal made me like Spicer at least 30 percent more.

“I think there are a couple parts of it that were funny,” Spicer told Fox News’ Sean Hannity on Friday. “But there’s a little of it — there’s a lot of it that was over the line. It wasn’t funny. It was stupid or silly or malicious.”

Whatever I will or won’t miss about Spicer, I won’t have to miss the lying from the White House. That will continue.

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